



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

PEGGY M. HATCH
SECRETARY

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Contact: Jean Kelly

Phone: 225-219-3966

DEQ-EPA recognize New Orleans Public Belt Railroad for emission reductions

BATON ROUGE – Today, officials from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency took a tour of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad to recognize its efforts in emission reduction. NOPB received nearly \$214,000 in stimulus funds to help fund the installation of idler reduction equipment to seven locomotives in its fleet.

The idler reduction systems are estimated to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by 696 tons per year, particulate matter by 20 tons per year, hydrocarbons by 32 tons per year and carbon monoxide by 91 tons per year.

“The emission reductions from the NOPB project are a perfect example of voluntary emission reductions that will benefit the environment for many years,” said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch, who could not attend the tour because of a previously scheduled ceremony. “It’s exciting to work with our federal partners at EPA and local partners like NOPB to achieve long-term environmental benefits.”

EPA’s Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resource Management Craig Hooks participated in the event.

“The New Orleans Public Belt Railroad project illustrates the multiple benefits that ARRA projects create throughout the nation. The idler reduction improvements supported by this award improve the air quality of local residents by dramatically reducing NOx and particulate emissions, save thousands of gallons of fuel for the operator and contribute to job creation,” said Craig Hooks, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Administration and Resources Management. “I thank the operators and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality for partnering on this truly green project which improves the lives of thousands of New Orleans citizens.”

DEQ received \$1.73 million in federal stimulus money that was specifically used to reduce air emissions from diesel engines. DEQ looked at projects related to on and off-road vehicle and equipment reductions. Other criteria used in awarding funds included maximized public health benefits, serving areas with high concentrations of air pollution from diesel engines and projects that were cost-effective.